



The Road to Snowmass

by Susan Fishbein, VA Los Angeles

It wasn't exactly like a dark and stormy night. It wasn't a waltz down the yellow brick road either. Getting the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic (NDVWSC) to Snowmass, Colorado was more like a long and winding road with a few bumps along the way. One thing is for sure...it would never have happened without the determined drive, persistent tenacity, and love for our veterans by VA, DAV and Snowmass Village.

Both DAV and VA began looking for new sites to hold the event after Club Med bought out the resort in Crested Butte that had been the home base for the Clinic for eight years. Steamboat, Winter Park, Park City and Breckenridge were some of the sights considered, but Snowmass won out because it offered the best facilities and an opportunity to expand.

According to Dr. Kurt Schlegelmilch, director of the Grand Junction VAMC— host facility for the Clinic, the new location offers new opportunities. "The most significant aspect of this location is that it gives the Clinic room to grow," he said. "We are approaching 400 participants this year—the most we've ever had. We couldn't have accommodated a number like that at Crested Butte."

Schlegelmilch also added that because of the location, the Clinic can now offer ice events like Sledge Hockey (a Paralympic event) and bring back snowmobiling.

Other advantages and new activities include a larger conference center for setting up the event, having the Snowmass Village Mall right out our front door, yesterday's "Taste of Snowmass", tonight's Music from the Mountains Concert and lots of entertainment options that big resorts have.

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Snowmass/Aspen History 101

It's been nine years since the Winter Sports Clinic was held in Snowmass, Colorado. Back then there were only 187 participants and the resort lived in the shadow of nearby Aspen. For those of you whose memories of Snowmass have faded, or if this is your first trip to this part of Colorado, here's a bit of History 101 on the area:

The Aspen area was originally discovered by the Ute Indians and called "Shining Mountains." In 1879, prospectors settled in Aspen hoping to strike it rich in silver. By then, the 300 residents named the town Ute City, which was later changed to Aspen in 1880. By 1893, Aspen was a booming silver town with 12,000 people. However, the boom went bust in the mining town when the Sherman Silver Act was repealed, devaluing silver as a monetary standard.

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TODAY'S SCHEDULE

6:45 - 8:45a	BREAKFAST: Conference Center
8-11:30a	Downhill Skiing: Dream Team 1, Grey Wolf, Naked Lady, Sunnyside
9-11:30a	Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing: Snowmobiling: T Lazy 7 Ranch Scuba Diving: Silver Tree Hotel Pool & Inn at Aspen
9:30-11:30a	Sledge Hockey: Aspen Ice Rink
10-12 noon	Rock-Climbing: Conference Center Circle & Inn at Aspen parking lot
11:30-1:00p	LUNCH: Conference Center Ballroom
12:30p	Downhill Skiing: Dream Team 2, Bonzai, Free Fall, Sheer Bliss
1-3:00p	Rock Climbing: Conference Center Circle & Inn at Aspen parking lot
1-3:30p	Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing
2-4:00p	Scuba Diving: Silver Tree Hotel Pool & Inn at Aspen Snowmobiling: T Lazy 7 Ranch
4-5:15p	DINNER: Conference Center Ballroom
4:15p	Ski Instructor Meeting: El Dorado Room, Silver Tree Hotel
4:30p	Team Leader Meeting: Stone Bridge Inn, Council Meeting Room
5:30-7:00p	<u>Educational Workshop:</u> Exercise prescription and guidelines for persons with disabilities (Brian Murphy, MPT)
7-8:30p	<u>Educational Workshop:</u> Chicken Little, The Little Red Hen and the TR Profession: What Do They Have in Common? (Dan Ferguson, Ph.D., CTRS)
7:30p	Music From the Mountains Concert: Conference Center

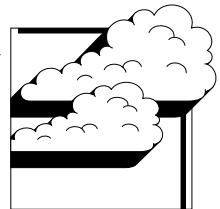
— “History” con’t. —

It wasn't until 1936 that investors tried to take advantage of the snow and establish the area as a ski area. WWII slowed down the development, but after the war, Friedl Pfeifer, a member of the 10th Mountain Division, returned to Aspen and began working on plans for Aspen's first chair lift. In 1946, the Aspen Skiing Corporation was founded. Just four years later, Aspen's status was confirmed as an international ski resort when it held world championship skiing competitions.

Snowmass Village, just 15 minutes from Aspen, grew out of ranch land in the early 1960's—an offspring of Aspen's success as a ski resort. With hundreds of acres of skiable terrain (4,000 vertical feet of skiing), great restaurants, bars and shopping, Snowmass no longer has to depend on Aspen for its identity and commercial success.

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WEATHER CORNER



Today we can expect mostly cloudy skies with a 20% chance of precipitation. Think snow.

Today's High: 45
Tonight's Low: 24



HealthWatch

Welcome to the Altitude

It's your first day on the mountain. You've arrived with three suitcases full of clothes, ski gear and snack food. Everything seems normal and you can hardly wait to start skiing, until you start thinking about frostbite, altitude sickness, germs, rabid sled dogs, germs, sunburn, the Donner party, avalanches and germs. A major headache is coming on and you forgot your aspirin and your asthma inhaler.

If you live at lower altitudes (as most of us do), here are some tips to keep you healthy and feeling great in a high altitude environment:

- ◆ Drink lots of water--coffee and soft drinks don't count and can even dehydrate you even more.
- ◆ Take some down time. Rest and let your body get acclimated. Don't try to do too much all at once.
- ◆ If you have any shortness of breath, ask for help.
- ◆ Wear sunscreen. The air is thinner up here and your chance of getting sunburn is much greater.

Stay tuned for more medical information in this column.

—“Road” continued—

As far as the hurdles in making it happen, there have been a few Dr. Kurt says with a smile. “This is a new challenge for us, but new challenges give us new opportunities. The folks from Grand Junction have had to work three times as hard to get this to happen and they've done a great job.”

Neil Camus, ski instructor, DAV member and sales manager for the Snowmass Village Resort was a key person in selling the event to the resort. A disabled Vietnam veteran, Camus was here when the WSC first came to Snowmass in 1991. He's thrilled to have the Clinic back. “This is a wonderful event for Snowmass Village and Aspen.” Camus also credits timing, luck and divine intervention when the Center opened up in it's usually booked up schedule. “The Conference Center was only booked just five months ago,” he said. Up until then, organizers were scrambling.

Odds & Ends

- If you haven't registered as a participant yet, please make sure you go to the host room and get checked in.
- The Lost and Found will be located in the Host Room all week long.
- Workshops are not just limited to participants—*everyone* is welcome to attend these fun evening educational events.
- The Medical Room is located at “Bedford A” which is two levels down from the Conference Center at the bus area for alternative activities. Hours are 7:30 a.m.-9:30p.m. Phone” 923-5442. After hours you can call 970-260-9205 for the doctor on call.

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—“Road” continued—

Camus who has lived in the area for 30 years said not to worry about the lack of snow. The snowmobiling and cross country events are taking place in a high narrow valley that's guaranteed to have snow.

So, for all the logistical bumps, staffing bumps, transportation bumps, new challenges, new events and other behind the scenes mazes DAV and VA have worked through to bring the 15th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic to being, the road ahead looks like smooth sailing.

VA, DAV, sponsors, staff and volunteers all welcome the largest group of participants ever to the Winter Sports Clinic. As Dr. Thomas Garthwaite, VA Under Secretary for Health said at last year's closing ceremonies, the event is about *spirit*.

We know everyone's spirit will shine this week.



Eats

Menu for Today

Lunch (11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.): Grilled chicken teriyaki; grilled veggie burger; Oriental & Mediterranean salad; German potato salad; granola bars; assorted sodas and water.

Dinner (4:00p.m. - 5:30p.m.): Boston salad with dressings; raw veggies with ranch dressing; hickory-smoked baby back ribs; sliced turkey breast with gravy; garlic mashed potatoes; grilled seasoned veggies; rolls & butter; coffee, tea and iced tea

Breakfast for tomorrow (6:45a.m. - 8:30a.m.): Sliced fresh fruit; assorted dry cereals; oatmeal; scrambled eggs; sourdough french toast with warm strawberry-rhubarb sauce; sausage & bacon; potatoes O'Brian; chilled juices; coffee, tea & chilled juices.

Zodi-YakYak

(The WSC's unofficial guide to your fortune and fame at the Clinic.)

Aries —Aries, this is your birthday month. You must truthfully tell us how old you are.

Taurus —Red objects seem to make you too anxious. Avoid all red today.

Gemini —Follow your instructor closely today. She/he will reward you with good treats.

Cancer —Star warning! Check under your bed tonight for a big surprise.

Leo—Stars don't say much about your life today. On the other hand, tomorrow is trouble.

Virgo—Why you keep thinking of elbows today is beyond us. We suggest a new hobby.

Libra—Free yourself! Ski without underwear today.

Scorpio —Beware of big critters on the mountain today...they are very hungry.

Sagittarius —Brown snow okay. Yellow snow, just say no.

Capricorn —Whatever you do, DO NOT look behind you. This is good advice especially on the mountain.

Aquarius —You feel like a swim today. Go for it and take your rubber ducky with you too.

Pisces—Be wary of Aquarians today. They will think you are a big yellow ducky.